

Proletarian Era

Volume 40 No. 3
September 15, 2006

Organ of the SOCIALIST UNITY CENTRE OF INDIA
Founder Editor-in-Chief : COMRADE SHIBDAS GHOSH

Price : Rs. 2.00

Observe Shaheed Bhagat Singh Birth Centenary in a Befitting Manner Comrade Nihar Mukherjee's appeal to countrymen

This is the year of the birth centenary of *Shaheed-E-Azam* Bhagat Singh whose name is written in golden letters in the annals of our freedom movement. He was an outstanding revolutionary and a martyr of the Indian anti-imperialist struggle. Within a short lifespan of 24 years his revolutionary thoughts and activities attained such a height that it astounds us. Through his words and deeds he left a message for his countrymen which has relevance even today. Across a span of hundred years his words are still reverberating, "Revolution is an inalienable right of mankind. Freedom is an imperishable birth right of all". Countless people participated in the freedom movement, but we have to recognize that there were two distinct trends in this movement.

One displayed a compromising attitude towards imperialism and feudalism; this was epitomized by Gandhiji. The other was the uncompromising revolutionary trend against imperialism and feudalism. Bhagat Singh was one of the finest leaders embodying this uncompromising outlook and was true to his motto, "to stand like a man with an erect head to the last; even on the gallows".

He was not a romantic revolutionary swayed by emotion only; realism was his cult, reason the guiding star of his life. His speeches and writings vividly bring out his rational thinking and scientific ideology. He represented the youth of the country who were disillusioned with the Gandhian politics of non-violent non-cooperation and ardently believed that only revolutionary

struggle could oust the British imperialists. Quite early on he realized the necessity of fighting imperialism through broad-based people's movements. The Britishers and many of the contemporary Indian leaders branded Bhagat Singh and other revolutionaries as terrorists, but he has a permanent place in the people's heart as *Shaheed-E-Azam*. Bhagat Singh was not a blind believer in violence. He said that the revolutionaries sometimes have to resort to violence only as a "terrible necessity". He held that revolution is "not a cult of bomb and pistol. They may sometimes be mere means for its achievement. No doubt they play a prominent part in some movements, but they do not - - for that very

Contd on page 2

Need for a pro-people, sound Land Acquisition Policy

Over the years, governments at the Centre and in different states have been acquiring large tracts of land, including thousands of acres of fertile agricultural land for government construction work on rail tracks, highways, dams and embankments and for setting up industries. There have been resentment and mass agitations against such land acquisition involving uprooting of very large numbers of people and on the questions of their proper resettlement and rehabilitation and payment of just and adequate compensation to them.

Agitation over recent land deals in West

In recent months, there has been controversy and agitation in West Bengal over land acquisition by the

CPI (M)-led state government for Indian and foreign monopoly houses to put up projects. The agitation has been particularly intense centring round two deals - one with Salim Group of Indonesia for their projects including putting up SEZs (Special Economic Zones), construction of highways and townships in the districts of 24-Parganas and East Medinipur, and the other with Tata Motors for setting up an automobile plant at Singur in the Hooghly district. These two deals involve acquisition of 46,000 acres of land.

Deep concern has been expressed in the state over land acquisition in the agriculturally rich districts, including large areas of land growing 2 or 3 crops. In response, the spokesmen of the government and the CPI (M) have argued like this: Industrialization would bring about prosperity of the people; the industrialists are not coming to West Bengal out of love for the state, but to make money; therefore, they would site their projects at locations as ruled by market forces, that is, at locations which are most profitable to them; however, compensation would be paid at higher rates than the prevailing market prices of land; the evicted people may be employed in the factories to be put up, or else can look for alternative employment.

But the people are by no means convinced by such arguments. Various questions are being raised and arguments placed by the thinking, discerning persons, by the people making a living out of the land to be acquired who are about to be evicted, as follows.

If the atmosphere is

Contd on page 3

SUCI expresses severe concern at the shocking anti-Islam remarks by the Pope

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in a statement issued on September 14, 2006 expressed deep concern at the tone and tenure of the apparently innocuous religious speech by Pope Benedict XVI yesterday (13-09-06) at Rogensburg, Germany, delivered at a time when the US imperialists in their bid to pursue overlordism and establish hegemonism throughout the globe are deliberately raising bogey of so-called Islamic terror and thereby fomenting on one hand anti-Islam anti-Muslim sentiment and on the other Christian fanaticism with a view to dividing the people into two opposite poles. The remarks made by the Pope in course of the said discourse, observed Comrade Mukherjee, will definitely strengthen the hands of the US imperialists and their Zionist Israeli allies in buttressing their sinister agenda with much ease and comfort.

Strongly deprecating the discernibly partisan politically inflammable move unbecoming of a religious head like the Pope, Comrade Mukherjee urged upon him to desist from traversing such a disastrous course and instead do everything possible to strengthen the fraternal harmonious relation between the Christian and Muslim populations.

While appealing to all peace-loving people of the world to oppose the move of the Pope, Comrade Mukherjee exhorted them to build up mighty anti-imperialist struggle involving all sections of the people and rising above caste, creed and religion. He also called upon the Muslim populace not to get provoked by such a shocking speech of the Pope and rally all their strength behind developing resistance movement against aggressive activities of the US imperialists as outlined above.

Observe Shaheed Bhagat Singh Birth Centenary in a befitting manner

Contd. from page 1

reason - - become one and the same thing. A rebellion is not a revolution"... "By 'Revolution' we mean that the present order of things, which is based on manifest injustice, must change". In a statement during his trial for the bomb blast in the Legislative Assembly he said, "We hold human life sacred beyond words, and would sooner lay down our own lives in the service of humanity than injure anyone else."... "We are sorry to admit that we who attach so great a sanctity to human life, who dream of a glorious future, when man will be enjoying perfect peace and full liberty, have been forced to shed human blood. But the sacrifice of individuals at the altar of the 'Great Revolution' that will bring freedom to all, rendering the exploitation of man by man impossible, is inevitable."

Bhagat Singh not only wanted the Britishers out of the country but his vision was that overthrow of the British rule must be accompanied by reconstruction of the Indian society. Talking about the so-called Indian Parliament he said, "The labouring millions of India had nothing to expect from an institution that stood as a menacing monument to the strangling of the exploiters and the serfdom of the helpless labourers." Boldly he declared that a state of war existed in the country and "shall exist so long as the Indian toiling masses and the natural resources are being exploited by a handful of parasites. They may be purely British capitalists or mixed British and Indian or even purely Indian...The war will continue. It may assume different shapes at different times. It may become now open, now hidden, now purely agitational, now fierce life and death struggle". This would end only when exploitation is done away with, sovereignty of the proletariat is recognized, and the society is organized on a socialist basis. He said, "The revolution will ring the death knell of capitalism and class distinctions and privileges. It will bring joy and prosperity to the starving millions who are seething today under the terrible yoke of both foreign and Indian exploitation. It will bring the nation into its own. It will give birth to a new state, a new social order." He changed the name of their organization from Hindusthan Republican Association

to Hindusthan Socialist Republican Association. He became attracted to Marxism and studied it deeply. He even talked about the necessity of establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. He admired the leadership of Lenin and held up the example of how in Soviet Russia poverty was eradicated and the country was advancing politically, economically and culturally. He stated, "Radical change, therefore, is needed and it is the duty of those who realize this to reorganize society on a socialist basis in accordance with the principle of Karl Marx". "Unless this thing is done and the exploitation of man by man and of nations by nations is brought to an end, sufferings and carnage with which humanity is threatened today cannot be prevented. All talk of ending war and ushering in an era of universal peace is undisguised hypocrisy." He expressed his solidarity with the international working class movement and proclaimed with deep conviction, "The proletariat will win. Capitalism will be defeated. Death to Imperialism". His martyrdom at such young age was a great blow to the development of socialist movement in India.

He was a confirmed atheist with firm commitment to materialism, reason and science, and clearly articulated his secular outlook. He had a correct understanding of the social processes that gave rise to the idea of religion in the course of development of human civilization and he pointed out how religion was used by the exploiting classes to deceive the people and keep them in chains. He firmly believed that economic reasons were at the root of all communal riots. He was against all forms of religious bigotry and the division of the people on the basis of caste and community. Referring to the Gadr movement he wrote, "...the martyrs of 1914-15 kept religion outside politics. Their conception was that religion was the private matter of individuals. Others should not interfere in that nor should it be injected into politics."

Thus stood Bhagat Singh towering in the midst of our anti-imperialist independence struggle, dreaming, and evoking that dream in his countrymen too, for a land free from all sorts of exploitation. A hundred years have passed by since he was born. Now, when people of

the country are eager to pay their warmest tribute to this great revolutionary on this occasion of his birth centenary, they are tormented by the question: why the dreams of people like Bhagat Singh could not come true in spite of their fervour and sacrifice: why the country and its common people are bogged into the all-out crisis of life that has shattered their dreams. Within this more than half-a-century since independence, the sharply cleaved country has produced ten out of the hundred richest persons of the world as well as the largest population of poorest people; some tens of thousands of millionaires as against some hundreds of millions living below the poverty line. The vast masses of common people now face a life ridden with abject poverty, acute unemployment, ever-widening insecurity in every sphere of life, shameless corruption and degeneration. Even after so many years of independence, the minimum basic necessities of life, like education, health and such others seem to be receding out of people's reach. Utter valuelessness and dismal degeneration cast their ever-deepening spell on people's life. Fundamentalism, ethnic fanaticism, abetted by overt and covert political-economic supports from forces in power or aspiring for power are ripping through people's unity and amity, rendering them further helpless in face of exploitation and oppression. In providing the correct answer to this crucial question, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, one of the foremost Marxist thinkers of the present era, explained to the people of the country that for historical reasons the independence struggle of our country contained in it two sharply contrasted interests and trends. One, eventually the dominant trend, was driven by the aspiration of capturing state power after the end of the British rule with a view to establishing exploitative capitalist system in the country for which it played a compromising, reformist oppositional role against the British imperialists. The other upheld the revolutionary spirit and aspiration of people, and fought uncompromisingly not only for independence but for ending of all exploitation of man by man. Taking advantage of the lack of correct political consciousness of the vast masses of common people, which worsened further as the party going

by the banner of Communism, because of its fake character could not realize the invaluable Leninist teaching on the communists' tasks in the colonial countries and could not provide the correct leadership to the masses, the capitalist class providing the compromising leadership gained ground and ultimately usurped the political power of independent India. Comrade Ghosh further pointed out that the Indian people now faced the task of overthrowing capitalism, through anti-capitalist socialist revolution with a view to paving way for people's emancipation from all sorts of exploitation. With these, Comrade Ghosh further added that the capitalist rulers, out of their fear-complex of revolution were hell bent upon wiping out every trace of the history of relentless, uncompromising struggles of the revolutionaries, such as Bhagat Singh had been. It was Comrade Ghosh, who time and again emphasized that those who would want to bring about a radical change of this society writhing with the pain of oppressed and exploited, a society where power, greed and corruption have become the order of the day, must come forward to pay their highest tribute to these great revolutionaries of the past and must acquire what were the best in them. They must assimilate in themselves, in their ideological-spiritual frame of mind, the essence of the highest cultural-moral-ethical standards set by the great personalities, the immortal revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh and others, with a view to enabling them rise up with still higher and loftier ideology, — the ideology of Marxism-Leninism so is to be able to accomplish socialist revolution in which Comrade Shibdas Ghosh rightly emphasized, lies the best way to pay befitting tribute and homage to the doyens of our history, of whom Bhagat Singh stands towering in the midst of all glories.

Therefore I fervently appeal to people of our country to take up the historical task of observing the centenary of this great revolutionary *Shaheed-E-Azam* Bhagat Singh with this fundamental and crucial object in view and chalk out and implement the year-long concrete programme to carry out this observance at every nook and corner of the country, in the best possible manner.

Crisis-ridden capitalism cannot truly industrialize, guarantee employment

Contd. from page 2

congenial to fresh industrialization and that is the path to prosperity, how is it that thousands of mills and factories, big and small, lie closed down in the state and hardly a week passes without more industrial units closing down? How is it that over one million persons lost their jobs in the state during the past 10/12 years of globalized market economy ushered in with such fanfare? Should profitability to the capitalists be the sole criterion in fixing location of projects even at the cost of losing so much rich farmland and uprooting so many people? Could not the vast areas of non-agricultural land available be utilized for the purpose? Could not the large areas of land belonging to the closed down factories be made use of? Will not the loss of so much agricultural land affect the food situation adversely? If the government pays compensation to the farmers, it will be in accordance with the Land Acquisition Act, a colonial Act dating back from 1894 which has proved over ages to be inequitable and unjust and does not take into account the soaring land prices due to urbanization. So, the compensation paid can never be just or adequate. Again, compensation will be paid to the owners of the lands to be acquired. Many small landowners do not possess proper legal papers certifying their ownership of land and are liable to be excluded from the scope of compensation. The farmers are being lured with the prospect of employment in the projects to be put up. Even if one from each family dispossessed of land be provided with such employment, which is a remote possibility, what happens? Most of these families have 10,12, 15 members with a number of able bodied ones needing employment. Even if one of them is provided for, what do the rest do? Swell the ranks of the unemployed? And very importantly, the majority of the people making a living out of the land are not land-owners. What happens to these tenants, bargadars (share-croppers), landless agricultural labourers, craftsmen and artisans who depend for their living on the land in question? Who will compensate for their loss of livelihood? And finally, what is the prospect of the huge number of people, thus rendered unemployed

by the land acquisition in finding employment when the cities, towns and the countryside are already swarming with the unemployed? Does not the government advice to find alternative employment sound to be a cruel joke to them? Most of even those who may receive some compensation, will find the money exhausted in no time.

Faced with eviction and loss of livelihood, the people in the affected areas are organizing themselves to resist the land acquisition.

The problems is a national one

The problem is not confined to West Bengal. This is an all-India issue, and has come up in different states at different times. Hundreds of thousands have been uprooted from their land and homes in the states by the construction of government projects, most notably dams with the impounded reservoirs inundating very large areas and of projects put up by private owners. Large areas of arable land have been lost. The woes of the uprooted know no bounds. Many of them received no compensation. Many of even those for whom compensation was declared, have not received the compensation, meagre as it is, for years after their eviction. The bulk of the uprooted people, homeless and landless, could not find alternative avenues of livelihood and have been pushed to destitution. There has been deep resentment causing unrest. Recently, there have been agitations centring round handing over land areas to industrialists. In January last, in connection with land acquisition for the proposed steel plant to be put up by the Tatas at Kalinganagar, Orissa, the protesting people were fired upon by the police, killing twelve. In early July, farmers protesting against land acquisition and construction for Reliance Group's power plant at Dadri near Delhi-UP border were violently lathi-charged by the police, and many were arrested.

Criteria for project site selection need to be reviewed

In this context, a discussion on what should be a sound national policy for such land acquisition is important. Clearly, the outlook governing land acquisition for projects needs a re-examination. No doubt, communication through nearby railhead or highway,

proximity to raw material sources and outlets for the product, etc. are important considerations in determining the location of an industrial project. But along with these, should not the policy-makers ensure that there is the least disturbance to human habitation and agriculture while locating projects, making this an important consideration with due weight? Should profitability remain the only concern even at the cost of great human suffering? The unemployment problem in the country is already so acute. Experience has been that the evicted people are never properly rehabilitated. In our country, this human consideration is violated repeatedly and conspicuously. This has been so glaringly revealed in connection with the Narmada Project. So, there is the need to re-frame the policy keeping the people's interest in mind. A government, if it is pro-people, should deeply think about how to undertake development work causing the least amount of additional distress to the people already so stricken.

Uninterrupted industrialization not possible within capitalist framework

In justification of the land acquisition, it is being trumpeted by the governments and propagated with fanfare in the press and electronic media that this industrialization will generate employment and bring about prosperity. It is an indisputable truth that uninterrupted industrialization is essential for meeting the growing needs of the people and providing employment. But what is the scope of such industrial development within the capitalist framework at present? For long has capitalism been past its prime, lost its initial progressiveness and the capacity for rapid industrialization. With its growth and development, capitalism had become afflicted with periodic endemic market crises. Free competition had given way to growth of monopolies, which had led to the birth of finance capital, financial oligarchy and through these, to imperialism. The earlier periodic crises had been replaced by ever-present general crisis. When India attained freedom, capitalism as a world force had already become crisis-ridden and turned reactionary

and decadent. The third phase of intense general crisis of capitalism had set in. Crisis-ridden capitalism had lost even the relative stability in between crises that it used to enjoy earlier and was plagued with continuous crisis day in and day out. Capitalism was now caught in the vicious circle of crises. Maximization of profit being the motive force of capitalist production, acute market crisis compelled the capitalists to keep a large part of the productive forces idle through lock-out and closure of factories, rendering millions of workers jobless. This, coupled with the erosion of purchasing power of the people including even those who still remained employed through spiralling inflation, contracted the market even more and further compounded and intensified the market crisis. There was no incentive any more for industrialization from the capitalist viewpoint. Capitalism was no longer capable of acting as the engine of social progress. Save and except scattered industrial development here and there, it was no longer possible to have comprehensive industrialization, unfettered industrial development within the capitalist framework in any country. At present, intense crisis grips the economies of all capitalist countries, advanced or relatively backward. Even the affluent G-8 countries are not spared. In order to protect itself, crisis-ridden world imperialism-capitalism has, through the globalization measures, launched concentrated attacks on the toiling masses by shifting the whole burden of crisis on to their shoulders, in order to maximize the profits at their cost. In this situation, even if the capitalists may put up some industries here and there from profit motive, they cannot ensure anything near full employment of the people.

Crisis-plagued industrialization in post-independent India

When the capitalist class came to control Indian state through the transfer of power on August 15, 1947, and started developing the country along capitalist lines, all the symptoms of crisis-ridden, decadent capitalism were vivid in this country. Political independence generated hope and aspiration among the

Contd. on page 4

Bogey of fake industrialization to deceive people

Contd. from page 3

people, and there was the demand for rapid industrialization. But Indian capitalists were neither inclined nor able to put up the heavy basic industries requiring large capital input and long gestation period but with low profitability, which form the backbone of industrialization. So, the Indian capitalist state, as the protector of the capitalist class, stepped in and by spending huge sums of public money from the exchequer, put up basic industries in steel, mining, petroleum and heavy machine building sectors and improved and expanded the railways, road system and communication network so as to provide the infrastructure needed by the capitalist class to develop industries and thrive. But even so, although the public sector industries and enterprises provided some employment, industrialization in the private sector proceeded haltingly and was soon overtaken by the endemic capitalist market crisis, long before even the minimum basic needs of the Indian people could be fulfilled. Lay-off and retrenchment began in private industries on a large scale. While some new factories continued to come up, existing ones started closing down fast. Eventually, crisis appeared in the PSU-s (Public Sector Units) too. Unemployment reached monstrous proportions and gripped the nation.

Situation further worsens under globalization

With the pursuit of globalization, liberalization and privatization policies for over a decade, the situation has further worsened. The toiling masses of the country have been subjected to ruthless exploitation by Indian and foreign monopoly capital in all spheres. There has been a virtual moratorium on recruitment to the government departments, the railways, post and telegraphs, banks and PSUs. Even the number of already existing workers and employees has been substantially reduced through VRS and the so-called golden handshake. Large number of posts have been abolished. A few hundred thousand have lost their jobs in the mining sector. Retrenchment, lay-off, lock-out and closure in industrial units are rampant. Thousands of mills, factories and workshops lie closed. The factories being put up as the crops of industrialization, new style,

are capital-intensive and employ high technology but generate very little employment. PSUs, even profitable ones, are being handed over to monopoly capital for a song with a resultant drop in the number of employees. The PSU-s that still remain are PSU-s in name. Operations and services required for government departments and the PSUs are increasingly being handed over to private operators so that the regular workforce to be maintained can be reduced. Job security and working conditions of workers and employees are under intense attacks, and so also are their trade union and democratic rights. Hire and fire policy and contract service are being enforced on a wide scale, reducing stable employment. Employment is being made increasingly on part time basis. More and more workers are being pushed into the category of casual workers. The scheme for setting up SEZ-s, showpieces of globalized market economy, was adopted in 2003 by the then BJP-led NDA government. The present Congress-led UPA government supported by the CPI(M) and its associates has approved setting up of 150 SEZs. Each SEZ requires acquisition of large area of land uprooting the inhabitants. SEZ workers and employees are subjected to ruthless exploitation. Service is on hire and fire or contract basis. There is no job security, no democratic or trade union right. What is actually going on is that Indian and foreign monopoly capitalists are jointly exploiting the country's cheap raw materials and labour, fleecing the people. In this way, Indian monopolists are providing the foreign monopolists with opportunity to perpetrate neo-colonialist exploitation on the country. Their coffers are fast getting filled up and the foreign monopolists are remitting huge sums to their home countries while valuable raw materials of this country are being used up. But very little employment is generated by the new capital-intensive industrial plants, which use advanced technology to maximize owners' profit, and whatever employment they provide is on hire and fire or contract basis as far as possible. The grimness of the situation has been reflected in the ASSOCHAM Report on "Relationship between GDP and Employment" released only on the other day (reported in

The Statesman dated 23.08.2006). The Report says that employment in the country in the organized sector, instead of rising, actually registered a fall of 4.14 per cent during 1998-2003! And this, while the GDP growth rate was 5.3 per cent! That is, the economy has seemingly been healthy and growing, the investing capitalists have been minting money, but the condition of the common man has worsened. And this, amidst all the fanfare about globalized economy! Despite all these concerted propaganda in the monopoly press and electronic media, fake industrialization has not been able to even touch the fringe of the problem. Unemployment is on the rise.

No new employment in the true sense is being generated in any of the states, not even in the metropolises like Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. Even the figures available from government sources in different states testify that the talk about generating employment through industrialization is a hoax. Unemployment is growing fast, lock-out and closure of industrial units are on the increase. This unpleasant truth cannot be covered up by the governments by any amount of fanfare. Even the West Bengal Government, which is expert in turning any truth upside down with clever propaganda, cannot hide, despite all the fanfare, the fact that unemployment in West Bengal has been rising sharply. So the governments have raised the clamour about self-employment, advising the youth to fend for themselves, to find out alternative employment/occupation on their own as if that is so easy! In such situation, the working class, the toiling masses, the people are having had to wage bitter struggle to resist the attacks on their livelihood, trade union and democratic rights.

Hoax in the name of industrialization

The grim reality is that there is total economic stagnation in the country. But there is the demand among the people for industrialization towards generation of more employment. Clearly, under the present circumstances, some provision for employment could have been made only if there had been attempts to set up industries in the state sector. But the governments at the Centre and in the states, serving the ruling capitalist class, instead of doing this, are handing

over the existing PSUs to monopoly capitals. In the face of the demand for industrialization, they are raising the clamour of "industrialization" through the capitalists to save themselves from the people's discontent, to hoax the people by painting a false rosy picture about the future through such industrialization while actually allowing private capital a free hand to play about with the people's interest, to plunder the wealth of the nation. On the plea of encouraging industrialization, they are benefiting and appeasing the capitalist class by granting large concessions to the industrialists, from the public exchequer in the form of reduction in or exemption from taxes and duties, tax holiday, etc. Ministers and bureaucrats, in the name of giving incentive to industrialization, are providing large areas of land to investor capitalists at cheap rates, usually through secret, lucrative deals. Propaganda in the mass media in support of such fake industrialization is being used as an instrument to implement this conspiracy. And often, an industrialist, having thus acquired a large area of land, just puts up a factory shed in one portion of the land and leaves out the balance area, using it for lucrative speculation or building luxurious apartments which is very profitable, while the factory put up may even be closed down. There is no guarantee that the industrialist will not use the land for purposes other than specified, and there are no means for ensuring that. Despite promises, the people uprooted from the land area denied employment in the factory if it is put up, and find no work even as construction labourers on the project as recruitment is done to suit the convenience of the owners or the contractors.

The poor peasants, share-croppers, agricultural labourers, craftsmen and artisans depending on the lands that are being acquired, who are still somehow able to make a miserable living, are being pushed into a new crisis. Robbed of the land, they can in no way be provided with employment, subsistence. They cannot find out any alternative occupation, they have nowhere to go. They are being driven out below the open skies. Feeling of insecurity, uncertainty about living, haunts them. They view the land as their last resource,

Contd. on page 7

5th August observed in States

[In the *Proletarian Era* issue dated 15th August, 2006 we published news of observance of Comrade Frederick Engels and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh Memorial Day in different states. Here we reproduce a few more reports of 5th August observance which could not be accommodated in the last issue.]

Jaunpur (U.P.)

Memorial Day of the great leaders of the proletariat Comrade Frederick Engels and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh was observed by the SUCI Jaunpur District Committee through a meeting on 6th August at S.B. Inter College, Badlapur. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Jagdish Chandra Asthana, Secretary, Jaunpur District Committee of the party. Comrade V.N. Singh, Secretary, UP State Committee was the main speaker.

Pratapgarh

Pratapgarh District Committee organized the memorial meeting on August 12, at Bar Association hall. Comrade Bechan Ali, district secretary, presided over. In his address as the main speaker, Comrade V N Singh, UP State Secretary discussed the cardinal aspects of the life struggle of Com. Shibdas Ghosh in building up the party and showed how in the process he developed, enriched and brought the understanding of Marxism-Leninism to a new height in the context of latest advancement in science and the evolving problems in every sphere of life. He also recollected with great reverence the invaluable contributions of Comrade Engels in establishing Marxism on a firm ground.

Sultanpur

Memorial meeting at the call of Sultanpur District Committee took place on August 12, at the campus of Kawkaganj Primary School of Chand area. Comrade Jai Prakash Maurya, District Secretary, presided over and Comrade V N Singh, State Secretary, addressed as the main speaker.

Allahabad (U.P.)

Allahabad unit of the SUCI organized a mass meeting to observe memorial day of Comrade Frederick Engels and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh on 5th August '06 at 5 p.m. at Mirala Auditorium. The meeting was presided over by Comrade S.K. Malviya and Comrade Swapan Chatterjee, central organiser of the party, was the main speaker. Comrade Nirdosh Kumar organizer of UTUC-LS also addressed the meeting.

Kanpur (U.P.)

Kanpur unit of the SUCI organized a meeting to observe

memorial day of Comrade Frederick Engels and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. The meeting was held in the party office on 6th August '06. Comrade Raj Bali presided over the meeting. Main speaker of the meeting was Comrade Swapan Chatterjee, central organizer of the party.

Moradabad

District level memorial meeting with Comrade Harkishor Singh on the chair was held on August 8 at the hall of Jalkal Employees' Union. Comrade Swapan Chatterjee, central organizer, SUCI was the main speaker. Com. Vijay Pal Singh, trade union leader and district in-charge of the party also addressed the gathering.

Mumbai-Thane

Memorial Day was observed by SUCI Mumbai-Thane Unit on 12th August 2006 at East Parel, Mumbai on the occasion of 111th and 30th death anniversary of two great leaders of proletariat of their era – Comrade Fredrick Engels and Comrade Shibdas Ghosh respectively.

Memorial Day observed in Central Jail, Calcutta

In observance of the 30th death anniversary of the great leader of the proletariat, Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, a memorial meeting was held in a solemn manner on 5th August in the Alipore Central Jail in Calcutta. More than 150 people including our imprisoned party comrades and the general prisoners attended the meeting.

Comrade Pranab Chatterjee presided over the meeting. The meeting began with the song composed on Comrade Shibdas Ghosh. Floral tributes were paid to the portrait of the great leader.

Comrade Pranab Chatterjee in course of his presidential address said that it was only by developing oneself as an able activist of the party on the edifice of higher culture and ethics that the real honour can be shown to the great leader of the proletariat Comrade Shibdas Ghosh.

The main speaker of the meeting was Comrade Probodh Purkait, a mass leader and the secretariat member of the 24-Parganas (S) district of the party, who was imprisoned under false cases. Comrade Purkait noted, inter alia, that just on the eve of attaining independence of the country Comrade Shibdas Ghosh emphasized that the emancipation of the people of India would not be achieved through this independence. Based on this realization Comrade Ghosh in that age of his boyhood began strenuous struggle and finally founded SUCI, the genuine Marxist-Leninist party on Indian soil, in association with a handful comrades-in-arm by braving all unimaginable odds and adversities as well as ignoring the innumerable derisions of the opponents.

Comrade Purkait said, despite various problems in our imprisoned life, some of our cadres and leaders in this jail are trying to carry on with the ideology of the party. This attracts attention of other general prisoners also. He appealed to all the imprisoned comrades to undergo intense struggle in conducting their lives following the ideals of the party.

Comrade Mao Zedong Remembered



On 9th September 2006, 30th death anniversary of Comrade Mao-Zedong was observed throughout the country in a befitting manner. In the picture Comrade Krishna Chakraborty, member, Central Committee seen addressing in a meeting held at Hyderabad party office on 11th September on the occasion.

On the occasion a meeting was organized which was attended by people from all around Mumbai-Thane district. The meeting was addressed by Comrades Kumar Kulshretha, Jairam Vishwakarma and A K Tyagi was the main speaker. The meeting was presided over by Comrade Umashankar Maurya and conducted by Comrade Kedarnath Pandey.

Protest against rape of a minor girl at Sultanpur (UP)

More than three thousand people of Chanda locality came out in the street of Sultanpur on 31st July last against rape of a minor girl student of the village Sarai Gopal when a demonstration was jointly organized by Jan Kalyan Sangharsh Samity and the SUCI, with its mass organisations AIKKMS, AIMSS and Bharatiya Kishan Mazdoor Union before the office of the local BDO. In the absence of the BDO to take the memorandum, the demonstrators held a meeting there. Comrade V.N. Singh, UP State Secretary of SUCI, and others addressed the gathering and demanded the arrest of the culprits immediately. With no authority accepting the memorandum, the demonstrators blocked the National High Way for 5 hours defying police atrocities. Finally, the Additional S.P. and ADM (E) accepted the memorandum and assured to take steps in arresting the culprits. The memorandum demanded Rs.5 lakh compensation to the victim, dismissal of the doctor for his false report against bribe and dismissal of the SO, Chanda for not lodging the case against the culprit.

Article prepared on recent controversy over *Bandemataram* will come out in the next issue

Man-made flood disaster in Gujarat

Recent floods in Gujarat have struck the headlines not just for the appalling disaster, they have brought out, they glaringly exposed how cruel callousness of government and administration can give way to man-made calamities.

There was virtually no rain in the state till the second week of July. And the very first spell of rain caused floods in central Gujarat badly affecting 40 to 50 villages, including the trapping of 140 school children in the district of Kheda. Thereafter, with the second spell of rain, came the still disastrous floods that swept over Kheda, Baroda, Bharuch, Narmada, Panchmahal, Godhra of central Gujarat, Ahmedabad district, followed by the Sabarkantha in north Gujarat and particularly Surat in southern Gujarat. The disaster, the flood cost in terms of loss of human life and destruction of property was appalling. But still more shocking was the attitude of the BJP government of the state led by Narendra Modi as also the fact that particularly in case of Surat the negligence and irresponsibility of the government and its administration acted as the ultimate cause of the flood and the consequent disaster. As it has come out in the media of Gujarat and Maharashtra, the Surat flood was caused by the release of water from the Ukai Dam on the Tapi river.

When heavy rain started in Maharashtra from August 5, the Ukai Dam was half empty. There was hardly any excessive rainfall in the period preceding the deluge. The level of Tapi started rising on a calm Sunday evening, on August 6, after the Irrigation Department started releasing 8 to 10 lakh cusecs of water from Ukai dam as against the normal maximum outflow of 6 lakh cusecs. Soon, the Tapi inundated the fastest-growing town of Gujarat, teeming with diamond-cutting and textile units as also standing crucial for supply of oil and gas of ONGC and GAIL. Incidentally and apparently, the administration cared the least for the past experience of the 1998 deluge, when a release of only 6.73 lakh cusecs of water had caused another devastating flood. Perfectly in keeping with the earlier records, the State Government did not disclose the official log of the dam containing data related to inflow and outflow of water since

August 2. However, it was made public by reliable sources through the media. A host of figures bears testimony to the whole truth: initial lackadaisical attitude when water level was rising upstream with heavy rain, allowing the dam reservoir capacity to get filled up and then as the situation went out of hand, releasing the above-mentioned huge volume of water all on a sudden and thus causing inundation of the township and around.

The aftermath brought out the real face of the Modi government. It laid bare its inefficiency and lack of preparedness, even intent and proper knowledge of the subject. Over and above the inefficient handling of the reservoir-water discharge problem, the situation was further aggravated by the encroachment over the Tapi river basin area by the builders' lobby abetted by administration in utter disregard to the environment and ecology and in the name of so-called development and urbanization. There has been a rising trend in adopting River Front projects, ostensibly for tourism and entertainment; the Sabarmati River Front Project was used as the only plank in the last Municipal Election in Ahmedabad, while a similar Tapi River Front project is already in the offing. The former is inundated by flood water this time, while the latter has added to obstruction of the river basin. While even the senior BJP leaders could not avoid demanding the situation to be declared as national calamity, the Modi Government floated tenders for the Navaratri Festival of Vibrant Gujarat on the Sabarmati River Front of Ahmedabad, promoted Narmada Dam tourism to visit and watch the spectacle of overflowing of Narmada Dam and set out for the Independence day to be celebrated as a mega event, gearing up the entire administration for the purpose.

After the flood, while the entire city of Surat looked like a garbage dump, while the poorer section of people living in the low-lying areas suffered from spending days in the accumulated dirty water, while carcasses of animals and human dead bodies were rotting and stinking around, or lying in the morgue of civil hospitals unclaimed and being disposed of without record, the government and its

Prime Minister's meet with Central TUs UTUC-LS places charter of demand

A meeting of eight Central Trade Unions with the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, was held on 19th August 2006 at the residence of the Prime Minister in New Delhi. Two leaders from each Central Trade Union attended the meeting. UTUC-LS was represented by Comrade Shankar Saha, General Secretary and Comrade Satyawani, member, General Council.

In this meeting sharply reacting to the Prime Minister's remark that globalisation is 'inevitable', Comrade Shankar Saha in course of his deliberation said, if globalization designed by capitalism-imperialism is inevitable, then in consequence, as is gravely evidenced, ruthless exploitation is inevitable, joblessness-poverty-destitution is inevitable. But the government claiming to be the care-taker of a 'welfare state' is acting like a passive onlooker to the unprecedented plight of the workers under the globalization regime. So if the 'inevitability' is accepted, it implies the working people will have to accept all the consequences or they themselves will have to fight back. Unfortunately, the government is disarming the working class by taking away their existing labour rights to defend their livelihood and has, so to say, waged war against them.

Referring to the unorganized sector he emphasized that not a single state in India can be cited where minimum wages, specially meant for the unorganized sector,

administration were busy in playing down the number of victims, particularly the dead. Surat has about 70% of its people coming from different states to work in power loom sectors, diamond industries and other unorganized sectors. Their identity has always been denied by the employers and the local administration, a ploy to hide the real figure of the dead with a view to covering up the inefficiency of the administration and avoiding payment of compensation or relief.

In such a situation prevailing in the state, right from August 7, the day flood started, SUCI along with its mass organizations like AIDS, AIDYO, AIMSS, took the programme of food distribution and

Contd. on page 7

are paid to those workers. What is actually paid is only 25% of the declared statutory minimum.

Again, on the principle of equity and social justice referred to by the Prime Minister in his inaugural address which according to him will have a beneficial impact on the working sections of the country's population, Comrade Saha cited the instances of plight of ever increasing contract workers across the country, who are several times more in number than the regular and permanent workers but denied of the equal wage or other statutory benefits.

Lastly, on behalf of UTUC-LS, Comrade Saha submitted a charter of demands to the Prime Minister containing major demands of the working class which comprised amongst others (1) Amendment of Constitution incorporating Right to Strike as the fundamental right; (2) Scrapping of undemocratic Service Conduct Rules carrying colonial legacy for employees in Central and State Government services; (3) Amendment of the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act 1970; (4) Scrapping of new Pension Scheme; (5) Withdrawal of proposed legislation for Administration and Management of P.F./ Pension funds – no FDI in Pension Funds; (6) Legislation to bring unorganized sector workers and agricultural workers on par with the organized sector workers; (8) Arresting erosion of job opportunity and protecting employment; (9) Amendment to the Bonus Act and removal of the parameters; (10) Rectification of the faulty Consumer Price Index compilation process; (11) Formulating National Employment Policy.

Appreciating the views and opinions expressed by the representatives of the Central Trade Unions the Prime Minister in his concluding speech, assured to pay due attention to the issues raised.

Immediately after the meeting Comrade Shankar Saha and Comrade Abani Roy, MP (UTUC) jointly handed over a memorandum signed by all Central Trade Union leaders to the Prime Minister urging him to advise the Finance Ministry for approving the bipartite settlement concluded between the employees and the management of IDBI honouring the existing rights of the employees.

Resist government's anti-people land acquisition policy

Contd. from page 4

last resort. Is this concern about security of theirs unreasonable? We consider most emphatically that it is not. No government has the moral right to deprive these hundreds of thousands of people of their only and last resource and pauperize them.

What could and should be done

It is clear from the foregoing discussions that it is impossible for crisis-stricken capitalism to go for unfettered industrialization today. We reiterate that mere setting up of some capital-intensive high-tech industries by the private monopolists to secure maximum profit does not mean industrialization in the true sense of the term. While thousands of factories and establishments are being closed down throwing millions out of job, existing vacancies are being extinguished in the running units, indiscriminate lay-off in the name of 'removing flab', retrenchment under the garb of voluntary retirement and golden handshake are galore, set up of a few capital-intensive projects employing only a meager number of skilled sophisticated hands and that too under stringent service conditions including contractual appointment can be termed as industrialization only by the spokespersons and bootlickers of exploiting monopolists. Obviously, could there be an iota of justification in acquiring fertile agricultural land by evicting poor peasants for handing over to the monopolists for such kind of sham industrialization? The governments are so keen to forcibly grab these landed properties of the poor by paying some compensation as if this impoverished populace is under compulsion to give up their belongings. But the same governments are pleading helplessness in occupying the vast unutilized land of the closed industrial units because of unwillingness on the part of the owners. On the contrary, liberal permission is granted to the factory-owners to convert the land into lucrative realty. This is how the bourgeois governments are "equally" respecting 'right to property' of the citizens as enshrined in the constitution.

We have been repeatedly saying that in the present situation, some

relief, some amelioration to the plight of the people is possible only if the governments could be under pressure of movement forced to open some employment-breeding industries under public sector as was done immediately after independence. Alongside, there ought to be a vigil against any attempt to dole out arable land to private industrialists without the government's assessing all the pros and cons including viability, sustainability and employment generation potential of the proposed industrial undertakings and the guarantee of not only adequate compensation but of gainful engagement of the displaced as well as their future generations.

The question of food-security

Besides, the issues involved in the problem created by indiscriminate land acquisition in the name of industrialization by private monopolists that we have already discussed, there is another important aspect that needs careful consideration. It is the question of self-sufficiency in food production. A country should be self-sufficient, self-reliant in food, in industrial production in as many respects as possible. Though the government in our country claims that there is surplus in agricultural food crop and spares no effort in substantiating the claim by presenting surfeit of statistics, the fact is that majority of the country's population do not get even one square meal a day. Thousands are dying out of starvation. Unable to afford purchase of bare minimum eatables, the poor, in order to meet hunger are consuming rotten even poisonous stuff like mango seeds, insects, etc. Moreover if the stock is enough, why the government is importing basic items like wheat at exorbitant price? Do all these go to show that flushed with abundant food production, the government is now licensed to convert arable land into industrial and real estate property? It is also argued that through application of latest scientific techniques, the fertility of the land would be increased and multi-crop production on single land would substantially go up. Even if it is agreed for argument's sake that the government in capitalist India which in order to stem huge influx of surplus rural manpower to the cities has hitherto not ventured mechanization of agriculture, is now intending reverse

the policy and is keen to use latest techniques in agriculture, will it not in view of decline in cultivable land be fraught with the danger of diminishing return? Moreover, the food requirement of the country must go on increasing as the population grows and needs of the people increase

Considering all these factors, it is necessary to make a safe and sound long-term perspective planning to ensure food security, a precision planning based on optimum utilization of land. We are confident that if such planning is made, there will be no dearth of land in the country for industrialization in the true interest of the people. But that warrants genuine patriotic feeling and a concern about the people on the part of the power that be. What is going on instead is that land is being indiscriminately acquired here, there and everywhere by whatever means possible and being handed over to monopolists to benefit them, to maximize their profit at the cost of the people, quite oblivious of another deep crisis, uncalled for, that might arise from food scarcity. In the name of cash crop production, the governments, both Central and State, including the ones run by the pseudo-Marxists are now abandoning cultivation of cereals and instead concentrating on growing the kind of crops which would be fodders to profit-generating food processing industry or constitute a good export market. It goes without saying that while the countrymen would die of hunger, get crippled by malnutrition and starvation, monopolists and MNCs, in connivance with the governments irrespective of hues would fill up the coffer by trading in the hunger of millions. This is the stark reality in which the governments subserving bourgeois class interest are now hell-bent in acquiring cultivable land by creating a smokescreen of so-called industrialization.

Mass movement — need of the hour

So it is clear that the unscientific, pro-capitalist and anti-people policies of the governments are responsible for the explosive situation that has come about centering round the question of land acquisition. The problem, the crisis that has been brought about by what is being done in the name of industrialization, cannot but cause grave concern. The fresh attacks

launched on the people by the governments through the policy of indiscriminate land grabbing must be resisted through mass movements from state to state. We appeal to all right-thinking persons, people from all walks of life with the country's good at heart, the peasant community and other rural people who are directly and ruinously affected by the land grabbing, to come forward and organize themselves in a sustained countrywide movement on the demand of withdrawal of the harmful land acquisition policy, on the demand to put an immediate stop to putting up projects, adoption of a just, equitable and scientific land acquisition policy for setting up specific industries in the state sector in different states and for proper compensation to, and re-settlement and rehabilitation of the millions who have already been uprooted over the years to make way for government and private projects. This is the need of the hour.

Man-made flood in Gujarat

Contd. from page 6

medical reliefs in different parts of the state including Surat, Baroda, Dholka areas of Ahmedabad, Amrouli, Katargaon, Singanore, Ved Road, Bharachha road, Dindoli and elsewhere. A number of medical camps were organized for the flood victims with the help of doctors of the Medical Service Centre and local doctors. In Surat a delegation met the Collector and submitted memorandum on August 16. It demanded a white paper be brought out giving all details about the Surat flood; a judicial and expert inquiry committee be entrusted with finding out persons responsible for this man-made flood; punishment be meted out to those responsible; People's Relief Committee for relief and rehabilitation be formed with the mandatory power to keep watch on the functioning of the administration; adequate compensation be given to the victims; long term planning be undertaken for efficient and effective handling of the situation before it reaches the catastrophic stage and such others. AIDSO demanded exemption of all kinds of fees for students of the affected areas.

Red Salute Comrade Swapan Bose

Comrade Swapan Bose, a staff member of the Party, member and office secretary of the West Bengal State Committee, breathed his last on September 6, 2006 in Calcutta after having been afflicted with incurable disease of cancer. He was 60.

A life long revolutionary, Comrade Bose, in the process of conducting an arduous unrelenting struggle covering all aspects of life as taught by Comrade Shibdas Ghosh, the great leader of the proletariat, had elevated himself to that level where Party and Revolution were his life, emancipation of the oppressed was his sole concern. While making every effort to discharge the apparently stereotyped monotonous laborious job of office secretary of the State Committee in a creative manner, beautiful in every respect, he with the high cultural standard acquired through the process of struggle became endearing to everyone who came in contact with him. Ever smiling and without slightest trace of any grudge or fatigue, he faced unper-turbed the gradually increasing complexities

and work load concomitant to the expansion of Party activities.

In the polluted ambience of self-seeking corrupt debased politics, Comrade Swapan Bose's was a character resplendent with the rare traits of an ideal

revolutionary political organizer mount on higher proletarian ethics and values that our party, the SUCI, following the invaluable teachings of Comrade Shibdas Ghosh has been striving to develop. In the mid-sixties, he was initiated to the Party through Comrade Badsah Khan and late Comrade Chitta Roy. The sense of responsibility and duty he showed while undertaking Party activities caused the Party leadership to entrust him with the job of assisting Comrade Durga Guha, the then State Office secretary. Dedicated as he was to the cause of revolution, Comrade Bose overcame the ties of conventional family life and made 48, Lenin Sarani, the Central Party



headquarters, his new address. After premature demise of Comrade Durga Guha, he took upon himself the all important responsibility of running the State Office. Even the jobs relating to the Party's Central Office were also handled by him in

addition. But never could one make out from his conduct and behaviour that he was shouldering such high level of revolutionary responsibilities.

Hearing that his condition was fast deteriorating, Comrades Ranjit Dhar and Manik Mukherjee, central staff and members of State secretariat rushed to the hospital and along with local leaders and comrades were at his bedside when he passed away. When the heart-rending news reached the Central Office, a pale of gloom descended. Comrade Asit Bhattacharyya, member and office secretary, Central Committee, and all other comrades present there observed a

minute's silence as a mark of respect to their beloved comrade.

As a mass civil disobedience against price rise was scheduled on September 7, in Kolkata, the last journey was deferred to September 8. On that day, the body of Comrade Bose was kept in the Central Office since morning for the comrades, various party units and mass and class organizations for paying last respect. Before commencement of the last journey around mid-noon, Com. Asit Bhattacharyya offered a floral tribute on behalf of Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, our beloved General Secretary. He was followed by Comrades Anil Sen, Sukomal Dasgupta, Provash Ghosh, all Central Committee members and Comrades Ranjit Dhar and Manik Mukherjee. With the passing away of Comrade Swapan Bose, Party has lost a trusted leader, an extremely able organizer and a communist character worth emulating while proletarian revolutionary movement is bereaved of a leading soldier.

Red Salute
Comrade Swapan Bose

SUCI demands institution of high-powered commission to probe into the mine disaster at Bhatdih, Dhanbad

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in course of a statement issued on 08/09/06 expressed deep shock and anguish at the tragic death of over 50 miners trapped inside a Bharat Coking Coal shaft at Bhatdih colliery, Dhanbad on September 7 last, following an underground explosion and indicted the coal mine authorities as well as the Central and State governments for being criminally negligent in providing rudimentary safety and security to the most risk-prone hapless mine workers.

Conveying heart-felt condolences to the members of the bereaved families, Comrade Mukherjee demanded of the government to institute a high-powered judicial commission to find out the real cause of this serious accident as well as how far the unpardonable callousness and disdain of the authorities are responsible for this disaster and also to suggest appropriate remedial measures to forestall any recurrence in future.



On 5th August Bihar State Committee of the party organized a massive rally against exorbitant rise in cost and prices of all essential commodities and on the demand of employment to all unemployed.

SUCI condemns serial bomb blasts at Malegaon and indicts government for failing to contain communal forces

Comrade Nihar Mukherjee, General Secretary, SUCI, in course of a statement issued on September 8, 2006 strongly condemned the ghastly incident of serial bomb blasts that occurred in the city of Malegaon in the Nasik district of Maharashtra this afternoon killing, as reported so far, more than 30 and grievously injuring over 100 of innocent citizens. Comrade Mukherjee severely indicted both the Central and State governments for having totally failed in ensuring safety and security of the common people and showing complete unwillingness to contain and control the rabid communal forces with a strong hand.

Demanding adequate compensation to the families of the dead and injured as well as wanting the government to bear total cost of treatment of those having sustained injuries, Comrade Mukherjee pressed for stringent and exemplary punishment of the arch communal elements that have masterminded and executed such a gruesome incident. He also appealed to the people of Maharashtra and other parts of the country to come forward, close their ranks and frustrate the nefarious design of the felonious communalists-fundamentalists to incite large scale communal violence in various places and maintain communal amity and harmony at any cost.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

- Jnاناتwa, Dandamulak Bastubad
O Biplabi Jiban Prasange
(in Bengali) : Shibdas Ghosh
Price : Rs. 15
- Selected Works Vol. II (in Bengali) :
Shibdas Ghosh
(awaiting publication)

**Proletarian
Era**

Annual Subscription : Rs. 54
Available at : SUCI Office
48, Lenin Sarani, Calcutta 700013

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF : NIHAR MUKHERJEE